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WAR NEWS.

A dispatch from Chattanooga dated Jan. 23 says:—"The trains are running regularly between Nashville and Chattanooga. Colonel McCollum arrived with one thousand mechanics and laborers, who are at work re-building the railroad to Knoxville. He commenced at once. Supplies are accumulating, and they have commenced issuing full rations. One hundred and fifty Confederates deserted to-day. They say the Confederate army still hold their position at Dalton."

A dispatch from Chattanooga dated the 22d. says:—"A surprise and skirmish took place near Strawberry Plains on the 16th, resulting in the capture of a whole Confederate party, numbering two hundred, among whom are General Vance and staff. Four of the officers were recognized as paroled at Vicksburg, when the party arrived here last night."

A dispatch dated on Friday last from the Army of the Potomac, in the Philadelphia Inquirer, says:—"Six deserters from the Confederate army came into the lines of Gen. Kilpatrick on Wednesday last. Two of them had been on picket, and by deserting their posts secured their own escape and that of the other four, the plan having no doubt been previously agreed upon. The number coming in for a day or two past has been unusually large, and among those brought to headquarters yesterday was a Confederate captain. Sharp musketry firing, continuing for several minutes, was heard about three o'clock yesterday morning, among the Confederates over the Rapidan, near Ely's Ford."

A staff officer from Knoxville, Tenn., a week ago, reports that General Longstreet has been reinforced with twenty thousand men and is advancing on Knoxville, the Federal forces under Gen. Granger retiring before him, and it was believed that the army would be compelled to fall back to the entrenchments at Knoxville. It is also reported that Gen. John Morgan is preparing for a movement on the Federal lines of communication between Knoxville and Chattanooga or a raid into Kentucky.

A dispatch from Port Hudson dated Jan. 13, says:—"The Confederates are concentrating near this stronghold and Baton Rouge. They are becoming quite enterprising. They push their pickets quite close to the Union lines. The Confederate General Adams has several brigades distributed at Woodville, Clinton, and Jackson."

Letters from St. Augustine, Florida, furnish intelligence of the reoccupation by Union troops of Jacksonville, upon the St. John's river, about forty miles inland from St. Augustine. The event is said to have taken place on or about the 9th inst.

The weather is mild—navigation open—and the ice gone.

In Memphis, Tenn. one night last week, a lady was aroused from her sleep by feeling the weight of a man's hand pressed so firmly upon her mouth that she could make no noise. On looking at her assaulter, she saw a man dressed in a cloak and cap, and having a curtain of black silk, with eye-holes in it, hung over his face. A companion was pressing a sponge saturated with chloroform, to the nose and mouth of her husband, rendering him helpless and unconscious. Upon promising she would be quiet, her mouth was released. Then the man, in the politest manner imaginable, apologised for his intrusion, and the sad necessity that drove him to this rude way of raising a loan. He would trouble her, he said, for her jewelry and money, and any small articles of plate that might be handy. His accomplice soon rummaged the house, picking up what valuables he could find, leaving the polished villain to watch the lady and prevent her from raising the house. After the various articles were secured, he gracefully drew a couple of diamond rings from her fingers, complimenting her upon the beauty of her hand, and finally, imprinting a kiss lightly upon her lips, withdrew.

GEN. BUTLER AND THE EXCHANGES.—A Washington dispatch to the N. Y. Times says: "Gen. Butler's departure on Thursday was full of interest to all the friends of prisoners in Richmond, who knew that he went away hopeful of being able to effect the exchange of all now pining in the Libby and Belle Isle, within a month, if he is not again interfered with. He will not recede an inch from the ground he has taken with the Confederate authorities."

The military commission now in session in Norfolk, bids fair, it is said, to well repay the U. S. Government all that it will cost if nothing more, by the exposures it is making of shamefully fraudulent steamboat charters.—There are new developments being made every day—among others the charter of the South America. Witnesses testify that she was more than 21 years old when she was hired by the government; that she was not worth more than \$20,000, of which more than half was in her engine; that she was chartered some five months at \$400 per day, earning for her owners \$60,000; that when she went out of service her hull was so rotten that her engine was taken out and put into a new boat.

Last week Capt. Sheetz's detectives arrested John Henry in Washington, for recruiting negroes to go North. The officers received information that Henry had several negroes locked up in a restaurant opposite Centre Market, and on going to the place designated, they found three negroes locked up in a room, by Henry, who had engaged them.

Henry Ward Beecher has written a letter to the trustees of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, declining to receive the additional compensation of five thousand dollars, voted to him at the annual meeting of trustees.

The Kentucky Legislature took four ballots for United States Senator, on Saturday, without a result.

It is stated by the Washington correspondent of the New York Daily News, on the authority of a gentleman who left Charleston as late as the 16th instant, that the defences of that city are now considered impregnable. In addition to the seaward fortifications, we are told that "five thousand slaves are employed in the construction of works of the most formidable character, for the defence of the city against the approach of an army by land, and that, although the number of troops in the vicinity of Charleston is not large, reinforcements can readily be obtained when their services are required. Fort Sumter, is now converted after infinite labour into a sand bag fortification, strengthened by the debris of fallen walls."

The profits of the Massachusetts manufacturers during the past six months have been very great. Large sums have been carried to the reserve fund for the improvement or extension of the works and dividends averaging ten per cent. in gold have been declared by twenty-three mills. These twenty-three mills, with a capital on the old specie basis of \$26,340,000, pay, according to the United States Economist, an aggregate currency dividend of \$1,763,200.

The St. Mary's Beacon, noticing the recovery from illness of Mr. Harris, the Representative from the Fifth Congressional District of Maryland, says of that gentleman: "His refusal to support the present Administration is based entirely upon his belief that the Administration is in error, and it is no part of his political creed to play either the hypocrite or the parasite."

An order has been issued by General Pleasanton, Army of the Potomac, directing the immediate execution of every Confederate soldier or guerilla, captured whilst engaged in hostilities, in the uniform of a U. S. soldier; and directing that hereafter no individuals or parties will be allowed to approach within rifle shot of the lines, until it is ascertained who they are.

Considerable quantities of fish are now caught in the small seines hauled in Hunting Creek.

We published a paragraph the other day, saying that the boarding houses of Liverpool are filled to overflowing with those seeking passage to this country. The emigrant ships come crowded, and their capacity is insufficient. Yet these are but the advance guard. Within the last ten years two millions and a half of immigrants have landed on our shores.

Captain Ainsworth has arrived at Fortress Monroe from the wreck of the propeller Thos. Swann, having succeeded in discharging all her valuable cargo safely and in good order, notwithstanding the unfavorable weather which he had to encounter most of the time. When he left the wreck the tide was ebbing and flowing with the ship, and her stern was imbedded twelve feet in the sand.